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# Letter dated 21 December 2017 from the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, containing an account of the Working Group's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2017. The report, which was approved by the Working Group, is being submitted in accordance with the note by the President of the Security Council of 29 March 1995 (S/1995/234).

I should be grateful if the present letter and the report were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
Chair
Security Council Working Group on
Children and Armed Conflict

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# Annual report of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict established pursuant to resolution 1612 (2005)

## I. Introduction

1. The present report of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, established pursuant to resolution 1612 (2005), covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017.

2. During the reporting period, the Bureau of the Working Group consisted of Olof Skoog (Sweden) as Chair and the representative of Senegal as Vice-Chair.

## II. Background

3. On 26 July 2005, the Security Council adopted resolution 1612 (2005), on children and armed conflict. In paragraph 8 of that resolution, the Council decided to establish a working group of the Council to review the reports of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict, to review progress in the development and implementation of the action plans to halt recruitment and use of children in violation of international obligations and to consider other relevant information presented to it. The Council also decided that the working group should:

(a) Make recommendations to the Council on possible measures to promote the protection of children affected by armed conflict, including through recommendations on appropriate mandates for peacekeeping missions and recommendations with respect to the parties to the conflict;

(b) Address requests, as appropriate, to other bodies within the United Nations system for action to support the implementation of the resolution in accordance with their respective mandates.

4. On 2 May 2006, the Working Group adopted its terms of reference, which were subsequently published as a document of the Security Council (S/AC.51/2007/1). On 8 September of the same year, the Working Group adopted a list of options for possible actions ("toolkit") (S/AC.51/2007/2).

5. Pursuant to resolution 1612 (2005), the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict has submitted annual reports to the Council on developments in relation to the Working Group since 2006.

## III. Summary of the activities of the Working Group

6. During the reporting period, the Working Group held eight formal meetings, on 9 January, 14 February, 18 April, 2 May, 2 and 22 June, 3 August and 15 November, and met 11 times in informal consultations, in addition to conducting its work through written procedures and informal informal meetings.

7. At its 61st formal meeting, held on 9 January, the Working Group discussed the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Colombia (S/2016/837), covering the period from September 2011 to June 2016. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict introduced the report, recalling its main conclusions, after which the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations presented the views of her Government on the report, which were later annexed to the conclusions on Colombia adopted by the

Working Group (see para. 8 below). In addition, a representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) presented the Secretary-General's global horizontal note covering the period from July to September 2016.

8. At its 62nd formal meeting, held on 14 February, the Working Group adopted conclusions with respect to the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Colombia, on which the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations delivered a statement. Subsequently, the Special Representative introduced the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Somalia (S/2016/1098), covering the period from 1 April 2010 to 31 July 2016. The Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Somalia to the United Nations delivered a statement to the Working Group, which was later annexed to the conclusions on Somalia adopted by the Working Group (see para. 9 below).

9. At its 63rd formal meeting, held on 18 April, the Working Group adopted conclusions with respect to the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Somalia, on which the Charge d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Somalia to the United Nations delivered a statement. Subsequently, the Special Representative introduced the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Sudan (S/2017/191), covering the period from 1 March 2011 to 31 December 2016. The Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations delivered a statement to the Working Group, which was later annexed to the conclusions on the Sudan adopted by the Working Group (see para. 12 below).

10. At its 64th formal meeting, held on 2 May, the Working Group was briefed by videoconference on the situation of children and armed conflict in the Sudan by the Co-Chairs of the Sudan country task force on monitoring and reporting.

11. At its 65th formal meeting, held on 2 June, the Working Group discussed the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Philippines (S/2017/294), covering the period from 1 December 2012 to 31 December 2016. The Special Representative introduced the report, recalling its main conclusions, after which the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations presented the views of his Government on the report, which were later annexed to the conclusions on the Philippines adopted by the Working Group (see para. 13 below). The Special Representative then provided the Working Group with an update on the annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict for 2016.

12. At its 66th formal meeting, held on 22 June, the Working Group adopted conclusions with respect to the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Sudan, on which the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations delivered a statement. Subsequently, a representative of UNICEF presented the Secretary-General's global horizontal note covering the period from October to December 2016.

13. At its 67th formal meeting, held on 3 August, the Working Group adopted conclusions with respect to the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Philippines (S/AC.51/2017/4), on which the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations delivered a statement. Subsequently, the Working Group discussed the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Nigeria (S/2017/304), covering the period from January 2013 to December 2016. The Special Representative introduced the report, recalling its main conclusions, after which the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations delivered a statement, which was later annexed to the conclusions on Nigeria adopted by the Working Group (see para. 14 below). In addition, a representative of UNICEF presented the Secretary-General's global horizontal note covering the period from January to March 2017.

14. At its 68th formal meeting, held on 15 November, the Working Group adopted conclusions with respect to the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Nigeria, on which the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations delivered a statement. Subsequently, a representative of UNICEF presented the Secretary-General's global horizontal note covering the period from April to June 2017.

15. On 5 May 2017, in accordance with paragraph 1 (c) of the note by the President of the Security Council on the work of the subsidiary organs of the Council (S/2016/170), a Security Council press release regarding the videoconference briefing on the situation of children and armed conflict in the Sudan was issued by the Co-Chairs of the Sudan country task force on monitoring and reporting. In addition, pursuant to the adoption of the aforementioned conclusions, the Working Group released five public statements as Security Council press releases, containing messages to all parties to the armed conflict, the Government, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army, the National Liberation Army and the post-demobilization groups in Colombia (dated 3 March 2017), to all parties to the armed conflict and community and religious leaders in Somalia (dated 30 June 2017), to all parties to the armed conflict in the Sudan (dated 1 August 2017), to all parties to the armed conflict, the Government, the leadership of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, the New People's Army and the Abu Sayyaf Group, and community leaders in the Philippines (dated 3 August 2017); and to all parties to the armed conflict, the Government, Boko Haram and the Civilian Joint Task Force in Nigeria (dated 15 November 2017).

16. In 2017, in direct relation to the conclusions adopted by the Working Group on the situation of children in Colombia, Somalia, the Sudan, the Philippines and Nigeria, respectively, the Working Group sent 109 communications to 48 Member States and other stakeholders.

17. Upon the invitation of the Government of the Sudan, the Working Group visited the Sudan, from 26 to 29 November. The delegation was composed of nine members of the Security Council: Egypt, France, Italy, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America and Sweden as Chair of the Working Group. The goals of the visit were: (a) to engage in advocacy on the basis of the conclusions on children and armed conflict in the Sudan, adopted by the Working Group in 2017 (S/AC.51/2017/3); (b) to assess progress and challenges in the implementation of the action plans signed by the parties to the conflict in the Sudan, including the action plan signed by the Government of the Sudan and the United Nations; (c) to gain a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities of the country task force on monitoring and reporting in the implementation of the Security Council mandate on children and armed conflict in the Sudan; and (d) to gain first-hand insight, including through a field visit, into the impact of the conflict on children and the role that the Working Group can play in addressing the situation. The delegation visited Khartoum and El Fasher in North Darfur and met with various senior United Nations and government officials, as well as with the United Nations country team and representatives of non-governmental organizations working in the protection sector and of the international community.